(a) whether Government propose to prepare guidelines for the choppers to be used by civilians specially VVIPs in the light of recent tragic accidents;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL) : (a) to (c) Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has already laid down regulations for safe helicopter operations in the form of "Civil Aviation Requirements (CARS)", which are in accordance with 'International Standards' stipulated by International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). In addition, DGCA has issued instructions in September 1996 for use of privately owned/State Government aircraft by Chief Ministers/Ministers, high dignitaries and SPG Protectees.

Promotion of tourism in J & K

*444. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian and foreign tourists who visited Jammu and Kashmir during last three calendar years ending with 2004;

(b) whether Government have any plan to promote and safeguard tourism in Jammu and Kashmir;

(c) if so, the details thereof, and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) As per the information received from the State of Jammu & Kashmir, number of Domestic and Foreign tourists who visited the State in the last three years is as follows:

(Figures in lakhs)

Year	Domestic	Foreign	Total
2002	45.71	0.08	45.79
2003	57.49	0.24	57.73
2004	68.81	0.41	69.22

(b) and (c) It is the endeavour of both the Central and State Government to promote tourism in the State of J & K. A special package for upgrading infrastructure through financial assistance to the service providers has

been sanctioned. The special package covers house boat owners, hotels/ guest houses, shikara owners and ponywalas.

Hon'ble Prime Minister has also announced a special Reconstruction Plan for tourism in J & K during November 2004. It includes setting up of 50 tourist villages; financial support for 12 tourism development authorities, establishment of new tourist circuit, assistance to travel agents,training to tourism industry personnel and developing skills of youth in tourism industry by Institute of Hotel Management, Srinagar.

A number of projects have been taken up to build up infrastructure in the State. The Institute of Sking & Mountaineering, Gulmarg has been revived and a new building is being constructed. A new building for the Institute of Hotel Management, Srinagar is also being constructed with Central assistance. A Pilgrimage Circuit for Amarnath and Hazratbal Shrine has been sanctioned.A tourist complex at Bachhan Depot, Jammu has been sanctioned. A number of projects for rural tourism, capacity building and new circuits, as also promotion and publicity, are planned for the year 2005-06. The State Government has also taken a number of measures to promote tourism in the State like designating tourism as a priority sector; adopting a two pronged strategy of capacity building and promotion of tourism; enhancing its presence in a large number of events, conferences and conventions on tourism held within and outside the country; encouraging tourists from South Asia, East Asia, Central Asia and Middle East; and bringing out multi-lingual literature about the State and its distribution through State Tourism offices within the country and through Government of India offices abroad.

(d) Does not arise.

Conference of District Magistrates/Collectors

*445. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Hon'ble Prime Minister is planning to convene a Conference of District Magistrates/Collectors with a view to giving impetus to various Central Schemes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government had received objections to the said proposal from various corners; and